

Motions received for 10 January Full Council

Golden Motion (Labour)

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING

This council notes:

- Privately rented homes in Bristol make up around 30% of the total housing stock.
- The cost of privately renting a property in Bristol has increased by over 50% in ten years.
- 40% of council homes have been transferred to the private rented sector through right-to-buy. The UK Housing Review 2022 branding right-to-buy as a 'strategic failure.'
- The current demand for rented properties at affordable prices has led to an increased power imbalance between tenants and landlords, resulting in tenants being warier to ask for repairs in fear of eviction, and the rising prevalence of 'bidding wars' - where letting agents encourage private renters to outbid one another for a property. This clearly has negative effect for renters, particularly low-income households.
- The Labour administration's work so far to support private renters, including the roll out of landlord licensing schemes, stamping out illegal 'no DSS' discrimination, the Renters' Summit, and the Living Rent Commission – which is exploring the options for rent controls within Bristol.

This council believes:

- Rent controls are needed in Bristol to stop homes in the private rented sector becoming increasingly unaffordable.
- Landlord Licensing schemes are an effective tool to improve conditions in the private rented sector. These schemes should be expanded city-wide.
- Further action is needed to protect private renters and ensure their homes are not in poor condition.
- Private renters are less likely to complain about problems with their homes if they face a threat of losing it as a result. Therefore, Government should bring forward the legislation it pledged to outlaw no fault evictions immediately.
- The Renters Reform White Paper should be strengthened. The Renters' Reform Coalition's '*Safe, secure and affordable homes for all: A renters' blueprint for reform*' should be the basis for reforms to the Private Rented Sector.
- Right-to-buy should not be expanded to include housing associations, as was included in the 2022 Queen's Speech – which outlines a government's legislative agenda.

This council resolves to:

- Bring the findings of the Living Rent Commission to Full Council and commit to implementing its results. Should the Commission recommend a form of rent control, this council should use its resources to lobby the Government for permission to introduce rent controls in Bristol.
- Ask officers to consider serving improvement notices on homes with severe hazards to prevent landlords from serving Section 21 notices and enable Rent Repayment Orders if the landlord fails to comply. Council officers should also seek to serve more improvement

notices for excess cold in homes that fail Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards, and help private renters claim back rent through rent repayment orders when they are eligible to do so.

- Enforce the ban on letting agent fees by issuing fines to criminal letting agents.
- To condemn the practice of bidding wars and instruct officers to find ways that Bristol City Council can work to end the practice of 'bidding wars' in the private rented sector.
- Support the Renters' Reform Coalition proposals and use council resources to lobby the government to strengthen the Renters' Reform White Paper. This includes calls for a national landlord register and abolishing the 'Right to Rent' checks.
- Oppose any expansion of right-to-buy to include housing associations and instruct officers to submit a plan to government of possible ways to boost affordable home ownership rates without depleting social housing stock.

Motion proposed by: Councillor Tom Renhard (Labour)

Motion submitted: 22 December 2022

Silver Motion (Green)

PRESERVING BRISTOL'S TRANSPORT AND DESIGN POWERS FOR THE FUTURE

This Council notes:

- There is a climate emergency and Bristol needs to change rapidly to adapt to and mitigate the existential threats caused by climate chaos;
- We will need to play a difficult balancing act to preserve what makes our city great whilst recognising that "do nothing" is not an option;
- The design of the City's places and movement will play a critical part in this adaptation and mitigation;
- We have specialist officer expertise in the Strategic City Transport and City Design teams that help the Council make good decisions to re-design our future City;
- The Mayor's controversial proposal to abolish these teams, with minimal detail provided as to their future form or ongoing functions;
- That outsourcing the delivery of some transport projects will actually cost more than keeping them in-house;
- The Temple Quarter Regeneration will shape the city for decades;
- The commitment made by the Cabinet Member for Transport to publish the report on Workplace Parking Levy has not been fulfilled, despite his reasoning that it was such an important decision that it should be put before Full Council;
- The recent WECA (West of England Combined Authority) Audit report that identified significant weaknesses in its operations.

This Council believes:

- Decisions that impact on the Council's future need to be taken transparently and informed by expertise;
- The Council needs expert support to fulfil its statutory Planning and Transport duties, in collaboration with other authorities;

- Although there is a good Transport Strategy in place, very little progress has been made in delivering it in a rounded and balanced way, for example the city needs parking and cycling strategies, but these have not been progressed despite repeated promises to bring them forward.
- Restructuring the expertise of planners in City Design and Transport departments without clear future arrangements has the potential to affect severely the Council's ability to make informed and quality decisions, which will inevitably impact on regeneration plans such as Temple Quarter;
- The capacity of the Council to continue to exercise these functions needs to be underpinned by a clear options and risk analysis and be referred for proper scrutiny, including to the Committee Model Working Group;
- There are different potential funding models that need to be explored to support the effective continuation of the teams, such as reviewing the capital recharge rate for staff and demand management options.
- Bristol needs capacity to be able to negotiate strategically with WECA, as recommended by the WECA auditors.

This Council resolves:

- To call on the Mayor to pause and clarify what the alternative proposals are for fulfilling these functions in sufficient time for this to be fully considered by councillors, including the Committee Model Working Group;
- That the proposals for ongoing staffing budgets should be considered as part of a budget process led by Full Council, rather than the Cabinet in isolation;
- To call on the administration to make the Workplace Parking Levy report available to Full Council as promised, so its potential to raise valuable revenue can at the very least be considered;
- To call on the Mayor to ensure problems with WECA's functioning are resolved before any further significant functions are transferred;
- To call on the Mayor to include in any firm proposals careful consideration of how Bristol will retain capacity to negotiate strategically with WECA, and the other Unitary Authorities involved

Motion proposed by: Councillor Ed Plowden (Green)

Motion submitted: 20th December 2022

VALUING THE COMMUNITY SECTOR

This council is facing a considerable financial shortfall and there is general concern that even more valued community services will be closed. In some cases, a much better solution is to encourage the community to take over the service with an asset transfer or to let the community become involved in managing the venture or facility.

Too often the option of community management is considered late in the day after the salami slicing council department has made the task twice as hard.

Cllrs from all parties will no doubt have examples from their own wards of ventures that are working or others that could be given a chance. I have added in notes a list of the ventures within Knowle ward as an example.

Asset transfers give the new owners access to grants that the council could not and are able to tap into enthusiasm and willingness to volunteer. Customers become more flexible and forgiving of small errors.

This Council has the services of a very good specialist officer to deal with asset transfers but there is concern that the back-up is not always as positive as it should be and a short consideration of asset transfers by Communities Scrutiny has led to the need for a second report. This could be done by extending time available to Communities Scrutiny or even better by a scrutiny enquiry day.

In the meantime, some positive factors that should provide encouragement:

1. We should look at the community value and not just a narrow and potentially misleading financial calculation as it affects the council in the short term.
2. we should look at how partners (e.g. police and NHS) can be involved.
3. we should be encouraged if the income is commercial from the public and not purely grants.
4. we must have the option of a responsive licensing facility prior to actual CAT.
5. we should be encouraged if a recognised problem is being tackled that has not been effectively up until now.
6. help in kind in early stages should be considered by the council.

This Council therefore calls for the Administration to show a more positive attitude towards asset transfers and community management and taking into account points 1-6, calls for action to follow a scrutiny enquiry and that a regular review be set up to consider progress and potential new opportunities.

NOTES

Examples from Knowle Ward:

1. Arnos Vale Cemetery - compulsorily purchased for £1 from "developer" and handed to trust formed by campaigners. Huge grants attracted and successful commercial and community activity. Voted one of the best cemeteries in the country.
2. The Park Daventry Road - old Merrywood school on closure 20+ years ago given to trust that brought together charities investing in training, education and community

benefit. Turbo charged by asset transfer and recently completed a new £10M + new community building and a key partner in new secondary school opening shortly on part of the site. A good example of council cooperation.

3. Redcatch community centre - some 20+ years ago a group of local people took over a dilapidated unwanted council building and with grants and local effort turned it into a massively popular, high quality community centre with low hourly charges. All volunteer, no wages taken by anybody involved. Asset transfer followed and used as an example by officers of a successful CAT in report to scrutiny.
4. Jubilee pool - council failed to run this much-loved community facility efficiently. Despite unfriendly conditions imposed by Mayor and severe challenges of energy costs memberships has doubled and there is a trading profit. Cat completed 30/9/22.
5. Redcatch Community Garden - took over redundant bowling green 5 years ago. Have attracted grants, despite failure of council to extend license efficiently and attract 200,000 visits a year for training, social activity and environmental and horticultural education. Asset transfer finally after much delay getting started.
6. Redcatch Park Pavillion- parks department a few years back aborted investment plans for urgent repairs and said they wanted to asset transfer instead. Partnership formed between community garden and The Park football club who needed extra facilities because of Daventry Rd developments. Parks department have failed to progress CAT or even licence and sports changing facilities unusable. In the biggest irony, the football club had previously done exactly the sort of renovation needed and the lowest bidder for the aborted scheme is a local sponsor of the club and stands ready to do the work for them for free. One of the most successful sporting organisations in Bristol with an emphasis on disabled and female teams frozen out.
7. There are many other community organisations, including our parks group, that have transformed Redcatch Park, that do excellent work and what binds the vast majority of them together is a desire to benefit the local community, roll up their sleeves and contribute positively. Being held back by the council is very frustrating.

Proposed by Councillor Gary Hopkins (Knowle Community Party)

Received 18 December 2022

ACCELERATING REMEDIAL WORKS IN THE CITY'S TOWER-BLOCKS

“This Council recognises the need to commission a ‘Waking Watch’ warden service to reassure many residents, post Grenfell, who live in local authority high-rises.

It is also noted that the cost of up to £2m (from 21st January 2023 – 31st March 2023), and £10.4m for the following year, is a precautionary move which should only be regarded as a strictly short term or interim measure.

For residential buildings over 11 metres tall, an urgent plan needs to be drawn up to install, as a minimum, individual fire alarms in flats and sprinklers in all communal areas.

Whilst acknowledging that this is a complex issue, often involving other defective building practices, Council acknowledges that the Government has already made substantial progress in tackling this problem. For example, through its Waking Watch fund to help building owners meet the cost of providing alarm systems or in the provisions of its Building Safety Programme (BSP), which contains certain financial protections for qualifying leaseholders.

However, more work needs to be done. Accordingly, Council calls on the Mayor to undertake the following actions:-

- (i) Commit to expediting more permanent and cost-effective solutions to this important fire safety matter (as outlined above)
- (ii) Task officers to provide OSM and/or Communities Scrutiny Commission with a regular update (containing timescales and milestones) on the progress of this project
- (iii) Consider joining with PGLs in writing to the Minister of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities with a request that sufficient funding is made available to identify and remedy every building found to have unsafe cladding.”

Motion to be moved by Councillor Richard Eddy (Conservative)

Date of submission: 20th December 2022

REJECTING POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF BRISTOL CENTRAL LIBRARY

“This Council is disappointed that, once again, the Labour Administration seems to be considering or toying with the highly controversial idea of moving the Central Library to another location.

It is appreciated that this possibility has arisen against a backdrop of having to make substantial Budget savings and the need to look at reducing the amount currently being spent on the Library Service.

Whilst the proposal forms an element of a wholesale evaluation of our branch libraries, and remains subject to further consultation, Council wishes to register at this early stage its emphatic opposition to any reform which threatens the future of our main public lending library or results in it being evicted from its current site.

Previous attempts, including the leasing/loss of two floors to the Cathedral Primary School under the former Mayor George Ferguson were fiercely opposed and the potential loss of the remaining building would not be acceptable to library users and the wider community.

The Central Library is already situated in an iconic, purpose-built setting, which is part of Bristol’s cultural heritage.

Accordingly, Council calls on the Mayor to confirm that he will ensure that this ill-conceived relocation plan will not be part of his latest library review.”

Motion to be moved by Councillor Mark Weston (Conservative)

Date of Submission: 20th December 2022

A FAIRER DEAL FOR INVESTING IN BRISTOL'S SUBURBS

“This Council welcomes the Conservative Government’s ‘Levelling Up’ initiative which seeks to address long-standing economic and social disparities across communities, counties and within cities.

Council further endorses the two schemes for inclusion in the latest round of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) concerning the commercial regeneration of Filwood (South Bristol) and the bid to build the Bristol Cycling Centre (Bristol North West). Locating a major sporting facility in a part of the city (Avonmouth/Lawrence Weston) will raise the status of a very deprived area and reverses a trend in recent years to divest these places of important public amenities.

However, Council believes that much more needs to be done to invest in the city’s suburban Wards. To this end, Council calls on the Mayor to give a commitment that for the remainder of his term in Office, he will seek to prioritise future national, regional and local funding applications for more projects based in and around the periphery of the city.

Council recognises that real change and the delivery of thriving, local neighbourhoods is dependent upon greater capital investment in our secondary retail centres. Echoing the primary objective of the Levelling Up agenda, if we are to ensure that all Bristolians live healthier, happier lives and are enabled to fulfil their potential, there must be a genuine, more equitable or fairer distribution of resources than has previously been the case under the current Labour Administration.”

To be moved by Cllr Graham Morris (Conservative)

Date of Submission: 20th December 2022

PROMOTING BETTER FINANCIAL EDUCATION

“This Council notes the concern which has been expressed by many professionals and finance institutions over the standard of financial education given under the National Curriculum or through Academy schools.

Critics of the existing system of training have argued that much more comprehensive, ‘bespoke’ and relevant material needs to be given to all age ranges. They maintain that children and young people should be taught more than the basic mathematics involved in understanding different forms of credit and debt.

As citizens of a highly competitive consumer society, with easy access to all kinds of complicated investment and saving instruments, the next generation must also be equipped with the tools or methodologies required to evaluate risk.

Council is aware that various schemes for teaching these essential skills have been run by individuals like the moneysaving expert Martin Lewis and some of the high street banks. However, much more systematic work is required.

Accordingly, the Mayor is asked to liaise with his Director of Education & Skills to establish, examine, and evaluate the current level of financial literacy being taught in state-funded schools. Following such an audit, Headteachers should be consulted on how this provision can be improved and built upon.”

Motion to be moved by:- Cllr John Geater (Conservative)

Date of Submission: 20th December 2022

A Universal Basic Income Trial for Bristol

This council notes:

1. The drastic impacts of the Covid Pandemic on employment and household incomes in the city;
2. The threat to income and employment from automation and artificial intelligence, which could affect a great many more jobs in future;
3. The development of universal basic income (UBI) trials in other countries, which offer a non-means-tested sum paid by the state to cover the basic cost of living, which is paid to all citizens individually, regardless of employment status, wealth, or marital status, which has been widely debated in recent months;
4. That a trial of UBI was promised by the Labour party had the party won the last general election;
5. The resolutions of other local authorities including Sheffield, Birmingham, Lewes, and Brighton and Hove [with cross party support] calling for trials of UBI;
6. A network of Universal Basic Income Labs has been set up and works with local authorities across the UK developing UBI proposals to address problems such as poverty, inequality, discrimination and environmental damage, long-term and immediately, in relation to coronavirus. One is operating in Bristol.
7. Birmingham City Council has issued a briefing on UBI. (1)
8. UBI has been Green Party Policy since about 1973 and more recently taken up by other parties. (2)

This council believes:

1. That the current benefit system is failing citizens, with Universal Credit causing hardship to many communities;
2. A UBI is the fairest, most effective way to mitigate the effects of coronavirus on people's incomes as it does not discriminate between employment status, caring responsibilities, age, or disability when providing basic support;
3. There is a danger of increasing numbers of people facing poverty as a result of the coronavirus crisis;
4. Testing a UBI is needed, as a UBI has the potential to help address key challenges such as inequality, poverty, precarious employment, loss of community, and breach of planetary boundaries through:
 - i. Giving employers a more flexible workforce whilst giving employees greater freedom to change their jobs;
 - ii. Valuing unpaid work, such as caring for family members and voluntary work;
 - iii. Removing the negative impacts of benefit sanctions and conditionality;
 - iv. Giving people more equal resources within the family, workplace and society;
 - v. Breaking the link between work and consumption, thus helping reduce strain on the environment in line with the One City Climate Strategy;
 - vi. Enabling greater opportunities for people to work in community and cultural activities or to train or reskill in areas that will be needed to transition to a lower-carbon economy.
5. The success of a UBI pilot should not be measured only by impact upon take-up of paid work, but also the impact upon communities and what the people within them do, how they feel, and how they relate to others and the environment around them; and,

6. Given its history of social innovation, wealth of expertise, and active networks across community, business and public services, Bristol is ideally placed to pilot a UBI.

This council calls on the Mayor to:

1. Send a joint letter with the other party leaders to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the leader of the party in Government, their counterparts in all opposition political parties in parliament, and all local MPs, asking for a trial of Universal Basic Income in the city citing the above reasons.

Motion proposer: Ani Stafford-Townsend (Green)

Motion submitted: 20th December 2022

Support for a £15 minimum wage

Council notes:

1. Bristol City Council is proudly a Living Wage Employer. However, as of 19 October 2022, UK inflation has risen 10.1% in 12 months. As a result, the Living Wage no longer meets the true cost of living.
2. 14.5 million people in the UK are in poverty. 10% of full-time working-age adults are in poverty, rising to a third of working-age adults in families where there is only part-time work. These are the highest rates since records began. 90,000 people a year die in poverty in the UK.
3. Higher minimum wages and empowered trade unions are essential to securing a high standard of living for all.

Council resolves:

1. To support the introduction of a minimum wage of at least £15 an hour, for all workers no matter their age, to help tackle the cost of living crisis;
2. To support all trade union campaigns for £15 an hour, and stand in solidarity with them in fighting for higher wages and working conditions;
3. To raise the minimum wage of council employed staff to £15 per hour by the 2024 financial year;
4. To lobby central government for the funding required to meet this rise;
5. To look into supporting this rise through a reduction in the salaries of the highest earning staff;
6. To strongly encourage all suppliers to Bristol City Council to pay their staff a minimum of £15 per hour by the 2024 financial year;
7. To use the power and influence of Bristol City Council to encourage all employers, especially the major employers within the city, to pay their staff a minimum of £15 per hour by the 2024 financial year.

Motion proposed by Councillor Barry Parsons (Green)

Motion submitted 20/12/2022

Ending investment in fossil fuels by Avon Pension Fund

This council notes:

1. In 2015, Full Council supported a Green motion and resolved that the Avon Pension Fund (APF) should consider divestment from fossil fuels and diversification into clean technologies like renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy storage; Council agreed that the Mayor should contact Avon Pension Fund and ask for a report on the issue;
2. There is widespread and heightened concern from scientists that declared worldwide fossil fuel reserves, if exploited, constitute a threat to the stability of the global climate; there is growing recognition that fossil fuel reserves are therefore a class of asset held by investors which have growing risks of being 'stranded' i.e. left with reducing value due to the fact not all claimed reserves now have the value being imputed to them, due to the need for them to remain in the ground;
3. An ever growing number of public and private sector funds, endowments and investment portfolios are choosing to divest from fossil fuels worldwide, including several local government pension funds. MPs called for their own funds to be divested.
4. Clarifications of the fiduciary duty of fund managers confirms that they should take into account a range of environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues and have a clear statement of investment policies;
5. The Avon Pension Fund uses investment provided by the Brunel Pensions Partnership, which is a leading local government pension partnership offering low carbon investment opportunities. This fund is only seeking to meet the 2015 Paris climate targets which are now known to be inadequate to secure climate stability.
6. Staff union Bristol Unison have given their clear support for divestment of the funds from fossil fuels, in a motion seconded by the Branch Secretary and presented to the Avon Pension Fund, as have other Unison branches also in the same fund.
7. Since 2016, the APF has enhanced its environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) to recognise and assesses climate change risks, undertake annual carbon footprinting studies, and review low carbon indices and the sustainability of assets; in 2017, the APF increased its allocation towards renewable energy infrastructure; in 2019, Councillor Pearce (who sits on the APF committee for the council) is already arranging a briefing on APF's ESG, divestment, and exposure for members.
8. In 2020 the Bristol Mayor declared the city would seek to promote divestment of the pension fund through signing the international C40 cities' declaration that we are "taking Divest/Invest action for a fairer, fossil-fuel-free green recovery. This commits to:
"Take all possible steps to divest city assets from fossil fuel companies and increase investments in climate solutions"
"Call on pension funds to divest from fossil fuel companies and increase financial investments in climate solutions."

This council believes:

1. The long term future of the APF is as a fund that is divested from fossil fuels and one that ensures a wide range of investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency technologies, energy storage and smart energy technologies, and other types of investments that will benefit the city and its future residents;

2. Council recognises that a carbon neutral city will create substantial, valuable new jobs in the future sustainable economy.
3. That the investment strategy and policies of the APF should rapidly be brought into line with this vision of the future inclusive prosperity and sustainability of the city and should not be bound by the 2015 Paris targets;
4. The council should actively call on APF to commit to move funds over the next five years from any holdings that are not seen to be ending fossil fuel exploration, production and processing
5. Bristol's participation in the C40 group of cities, where pension divestment is a headline commitment, mandates the City Council to take a regional lead on this issue;
6. The process of divestment and diversification is also important and should be managed in a way that ensures just transition to new employment, supporting skills development for new sectors and a range of opportunities - with backing from WECA.
7. Now is the time for action; the current strategy of 'engagement' with high emission companies, is not showing to be swift, or effective enough.
8. The council should work with staff to debate and explain the need for funds to support new investments meeting commitments to social and environmental justice, learning from the successful engagement of the Environment Agency Pension Fund, which is also part of the Brunel Pensions Partnership.

This council therefore resolves to:

1. Ask the Mayor and Councillor Pearce to meet with the head of the Avon Pension Fund to discuss the divestment of funds over the next 5 years and the review of the fund's ESG policies;
2. To support the promotion of investment in clean technologies that support renewable energy, energy efficiency, smart energy and energy storage among other investments that are in line with such policies, the City Leap agenda, and the city's goals for 2030;
3. Use its full influence and voice on the Avon Pension Fund committee, and its relationship with the representatives of the other authorities which are the core members of the fund (Bath and North East Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council, and North Somerset Council, plus WECA) to advocate urgently for divestment from all fossil fuel stocks in the existing pension fund over a three year period
4. To liaise with fund members in the city and council unions about the case for changes to their pensions while ensuring a just transition for workers in sectors that will change, and how this helps achieve a carbon neutral city by 2030.

Motion to be moved by: Cllr Heather Mack (Green)

Date of Submission: 20/12/2022

Energy Crisis and Cost of Living

Full Council notes that:

1. We must take action to address the energy crisis and its impact on fuel poverty especially when the energy price cap rises again in January 2023.
2. We must be ready to protect our citizen from this crisis which will plunge people into poverty at no fault of their own.
3. We must protect the most vulnerable in our community who may be left out.
4. We must support the volunteers and action groups who will offer their help, with a well organised and well-informed action plan.
5. That this is a huge problem that needs to be addressed and that having a actionable plan by this winter may not be conceivable. However, this problem is not going away.
6. There is a strong link between lifting people out of poverty and making real terms cost savings, especially in education, welfare, and criminal justice.
7. If you convince people who can afford implementing energy saving actions that are cost neutral, a model to facilitate change is created that can then be funded for lower income homes in the future.

Full Council believes that:

1. Support for households so far is very welcome - but it simply does not go far enough. Leaving people in a position where they need to decide on eating or heating.
2. People are struggling to pay their bills and intervention is needed immediately.
3. The support so far has not extended to businesses, schools, and other public institutions such as hospitals and care homes, who will not be able to afford electricity therefore either going under or seeing periods of closures.
4. Bristol is fortunate in having the Bristol Energy Network (BEN) which has the skills and expertise to resurrect their approaches around education and support outlined in the resolution.

Full Council Resolves to:

1. Work with WECA and the Skills and Carbon Reduction Initiative (under the green recovery fund) to seek funding for a direct-action campaign with the “No Cold Homes” Bristol partnership including Bristol Energy network.
2. Work with BEN and the No Cold Homes partnership to support them in delivering their programme of education and ‘DIY’ approach to low cost, impactful measures open to homeowners and tenants. (e.g. draft-proofing, perplex secondary glazing etc).

3. In conjunction with Bristol's energy suppliers to develop a campaign to encourage take up for those not claiming the Government's Warm Homes Discount, which will open again in Nov 2022.

4. Provide a dedicated tab and a web page on the Cost-of-Living Hub, with regularly updated details of all support available, including details of the Warm / Welcome Spaces Programme

5. Work with Bristol's energy suppliers to widely advertise the discounts and grants available to fixed or low-income Bristolians.

Motion proposed by Councillor Lisa Stone

Motion submitted 20.12.2022

Notes:

Reference - Warm Home Discount Scheme: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

About Us - Enough is Enough (wesayenough.co.uk)

Plant Based solutions Motion

This council Notes:

- A recent study found that it will be impossible for the EU to cut its methane emissions in line with what the science says is needed (45% reduction by 2030) without cutting emissions in the meat and dairy sector.[1]
- Producing a kilo of beef creates, on average, 12 times more CO₂e than a kilo of tofu or other soya based proteins; [2]
- Producing a litre of dairy milk uses, on average, at least four times as much land as producing a litre of plant milk. [3]
- Savings to the NHS will come from healthier, plant-based diets. Sustain estimates that meat over-consumption costs the NHS directly £1.2 billion, and 45,000 deaths annually. [4]
- A 2018 Oxford University study concluded that adopting a plant-based diet is the single biggest thing we can do to reduce emissions.
- Henry Dimbleby, in the National Food Strategy concluded that a 30% reduction in meat consumption is necessary for future food security. The National Food Strategy also states that obesity alone accounts for 8% of annual health spend in the UK, or £18bn. [4]
- In June 2021, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) recommended that the consumption of beef, lamb and dairy should be reduced by at least 20% by 2030.
- Sir David Attenborough has said that we ‘must reduce our meat & dairy consumption for the sake of the planet’, & that the planet ‘simply cannot sustain billions of meat eaters’.
- That a growing number of councils have made a commitment to plant-based catering or a shift away from meat:
 - o Lewisham Borough Council - fully plant-based in all corporate events
 - o Enfield Borough Council - does not serve meat at any meetings or events
 - o Faversham Town Council - fully plant-based at events
 - o Hythe Town Council - fully plant-based at all council functions
 - o Leeds City Council - two meat free days per week in schools
 - o Oxfordshire County Council - fully plant-based in all meetings & events
 - o Cambridge City Council - fully plant-based at meetings & promoting PB at events

This Council Believes:

- We should act in line with the One City Climate Strategy which identifies consumption in the city as the leading source of global heating emissions to be tackled;
- Without meat and dairy consumption, global farmland use could be reduced by more than 75% – an area equivalent to the US, China, European Union and Australia combined – and still feed the world. Loss of wild areas to agriculture is the leading cause of the current mass extinction of wildlife. [5]
- What we do with land is important from a climate perspective because of its ‘opportunity cost’. If land wasn’t being used for livestock farming it could be used for something that is beneficial for the climate, like reforestation, which removes carbon from the air.

Therefore Council Calls on the Mayor to:

- Write to the government supporting UK endorsement of the Plant Based Treaty and invite all Party Group Leaders to sign the letter

And asks Council officers to explore options to:

- Ensure that food provided at all council catered events and meetings is entirely plant-based, preferably using ingredients sourced from local food surplus organisations.
- Ensure that Council school meals services have plant-based menus available as part of their regular offer on at least two days per week
- Work on outreach to schools and young people to actively influence and inform of food choices and their impact on the environment, health and animal welfare.
- Encourage and empower students to make informed decisions about the food available in their school.
- Inspire, promote and support initiatives surrounding food growing, preparation and waste avoidance, especially as part of school and community projects.
- Recognise the benefit of sourcing food locally from producers who follow sustainable principles.
- Use City Council Civic events to promote and showcase plant-based food options, alongside displayed information about the climate benefits and relative cost of different protein/food sources.
- Ensure that there are plant-based food options available at all City Council run events which involve catering (ie minimum from at least one caterer), where reasonably possible.
- Ensure that when events occur on City Council open spaces, and where catering is provided, that plant-based options are available (ie minimum from at least one caterer), secured through the use of terms and conditions of hire (where reasonably possible).
- Secure through a contract specification when re-tendering for suppliers that plant-based food and drink options are to be available at kiosks on City Council open spaces and Council run cafes (where reasonably possible). Similarly when possible via future contract specification when re-tendering for suppliers for Council run cafes, specify that vegetable/legume rich plant-based options are listed prominently on menus, above non plant-based options in line with Flexitarian principles.
- Report back to Full Council regarding progress on the actions above.

Motion submitted by: Cllr Martin Fodor (Green)

Submitted: 20 December 2022

Footnotes

1. http://changingmarkets.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/CE_Delft_210502_Methane_reduction_potential_in_the_EU_Def.pdf
2. www.ethicalconsumer.org/food-drink/climate-impact-meat-vegetarian-vegan-diets
3. www.ethicalconsumer.org/food-drink/plant-vs-dairy-comparing-their-climate-impacts
4. <https://www.foodfortheplanet.org.uk/faqs>
5. National Food Strategy (published July 2021) - <https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/National-Food-Strategy-Recommendations-in-Full.pdf>
6. <https://josephpoore.com/Science%20360%206392%20987%20-%20Accepted%20Manuscript.pdf>

A citywide ban on digital billboards

This Council notes:

- There is a growing pressure from commercial advertisers for new digital advertising screens across the city alongside highways, on footpaths, and on walls of prominent or vacant sites.
- There is also a switch to digital advertising on phone boxes (advertising is their main source of income - not the phone calls in the age of mobile phones) and bus shelters.
- Despite the revenue provided by Bus Shelter advertising in providing a public amenity in support of sustainable transport, the impact of illuminated and digital adverts on bus shelters is out of place in residential streets.
- Existing billboards may not have planning permission but there has been no consistent approach to removing them via enforcement.
- Many advertising companies are switching to digital billboards which allow them to sell many more advertising slots and increase profits as well as reducing the cost of changing advertising. These digital screens show static but alternating digital adverts which can be updated remotely.
- The law governing display advertising restricts objections to ground of highway safety and amenity only.
- Recent planning appeals have been made in response to rejection of digital advertising on some sites, and with stronger declared policies the planning response could be clearer and some of the initial applications and appeals could be avoided.
- That the Council adopted a new Advertising & Sponsorship Policy in 2021 for advertising sites it controls which restricts ads for High Fat Sugar Salt products, gambling, alcohol and payday loans. (1)
- The high energy consumption of digital billboards adds a growing impact to the city's carbon footprint, (2) The Council's One City Climate Strategy from February 2020 resolved to "[Develop] a citywide shared understanding and commitment to responsible consumption (including lower carbon food and reduced flying), which acknowledges the generally lower impact of lower income households; and [Create] advertising standards and restrictions to support responsible consumption."
- The bright illumination from digital billboards at all hours can also affect local wildlife and local residents, including severe mental health impacts. (3)
- Billboards are subject to objections and controversy every time an application is made, local residents do not want such billboards in their neighbourhoods"
- That many outdoor advertising spaces (both council-controlled and private) contain adverts for high carbon industries such as airlines, airports, SUVs and fossil fuel companies.
- That the French city of Grenoble removed over 326 advertising spaces from its city from 2015 onwards. (4)

This council believes:

- New digital advertising screens are unpopular with Bristol residents as evidenced by the high volume of objections received to planning applications for new digital advertising screens. (5)
- Advertising drives consumption and predominantly represents major consumer goods companies; most adverts are for national and international brands not local businesses so this is limited benefit to the local economy.

- Billboard advertising is a danger to road safety; its purpose is to distract attention. (6)
- Envy and body shame are a phenomenon associated with the prevalence of corporate advertising
- Mental health issues relating to body image are a growing and persistent issue affecting many young people and adults. (7)
- The greatest climate impact in our city is the impact on consumption of goods and services; constant pressure to consume is driven by continuous, pervasive advertising. Extra emissions resulting from advertising products is calculated to have added 186million tonnes of CO2e in 2019 (8)
- When travelling or relaxing outdoors residents have no choice if confronted by digital billboards; the council does not have to enable this negative experience
- There are unequal standards of amenity across the city and some areas have traditionally been better protected than others; the council could set a uniform, high standard of amenity to redress this unequal amenity and ensure fairer standards across the whole city.
- While there are pressures for commercialising council assets the council need not be either a driver of digital advertising through its own walls and structures, nor an enabler through weak policies.

This council therefore calls on the Mayor:

- To introduce a new, high standard of amenity across the whole city, excluding digital billboards and taking enforcement action against unlawful billboard sites.
- To set the highest road safety standards across the city with a declared presumption against distracting digital billboards on the whole road network.
- To end council-initiated billboard sites on walls or other structures.
- To introduce these changes through the local plan and public announcements on property policies.
- To enforce existing restrictions in its Advertising & Sponsorship Policy regarding excludes on ads for junk food, alcohol, payday loans and gambling across council-owned advertising sites.
- To update the Council's Advertising & Sponsorship Policy to include restrictions on highly polluting products including as airlines, airports, fossil fuel companies, SUVs, petrol diesel and hybrid vehicles.
- To work towards Bristol becoming a billboard free city, with space left purely for local noticeboards, signage or public information and creative arts and flags.
- Until that time, commit to ensuring the use of renewable energy in all City Council contracts.
- To report back on progress within a year.

Motion to be moved by: Cllr Martin Fodor (Green)

Date of submission: 20/12/2022

Notes:

1. <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s58004/Appendix%20Ai%20-%20Advertising%20and%20Sponsorship%20Policy.pdf>

2. A large digital advertising screen requires the same electricity as 32 average UK households. A double sided bus stop advertising screen requires the same electricity as three UK households (Source: Energy Consumption in the UK 2021 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/energy-consumption-in-the-uk-2021>)
3. Living Next to Digital Billboards report, 2021: <https://adfrecities.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/living-next-to-digital-billboards-M32.pdf>)
4. The Daily Telegraph: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11250670/Grenoble-to-replace-street-advertising-with-trees-and-community-spaces.html>
5. A 2021 survey of residents living or commuting past the new large advertising screens on the M32 in Eastville show a high level of concerns with the advertising screens including degradation of their neighbourhood and social cohesion, a feeling that the commercial interests of advertisers were being prioritised over residents' mental health and wellbeing, impacts of light pollution from the digital screens including through people's bedroom windows, climate impacts of the consumerism model promoted on billboards and distractions to drivers with road safety implications. (Adblock Bristol (2021) Living Next to Digital Billboards report, <https://adfrecities.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/living-next-to-digital-billboards-M32.pdf>)
6. Oviedo-Trespalacios et al. (2019), The impact of road advertising signs on driver behaviour and implications for road safety: A critical systematic review. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2019.01.012>)
7. How outdoor advertising impacts health and wellbeing, Adblock Bristol (2022) <http://adfrecities.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/How-outdoor-advertising-impacts-health-and-wellbeing.pdf>)
8. Advertised Emissions report, 2021 - <https://www.purposedisruptors.org/advertised-emissions>

Mobilise community investments to tackle climate change

Full Council notes:

1. That this council unanimously declared a climate emergency in November 2018 following a Green Motion to Council
2. The motion committed the city to achieve net zero carbon impact by 2030 and there are now 8 years left to this target date
3. A new low risk model called Community Municipal Investments [CMI] was developed by Leeds University and Abundance Investments platform with UK Government and EU support. This had the support of 4 local authorities including Bristol City Council. [1]
4. This concept is now proven to mobilise local and other investment and channels local savings into local projects with low risk and a modest returns. [2]
5. The same process can be repeated again annually for further funds to be raised to support new projects.
6. The council has been progressing a package of low carbon opportunities called City Leap since May 2018. City Leap is nearing the end of a procurement process after restarting the process in 2020 and the joint venture has been suggested as a vehicle to deliver community funded investments alongside the projects it funds.
7. Municipal Bonds can also be used to raise capital for local projects and the LGA offers a platform for this form of investment to be supported.

Full Council believes:

1. That offering local savers a way to support the city's journey to carbon neutrality mobilises community engagement in the process of change, attracts significant sums for named projects, and should be developed. 72% of people want to lend savings to help councils develop Climate Emergency Plans [3]
2. That offering security and a modest rate of interest through municipal bonds is an established way to develop local infrastructure [4]. This could complement other projects such as the successful Bristol Energy Cooperative.
3. That CMIs can help us fund and develop a series of practical projects for a low carbon transition in partnership with others which will be popular with local savers.
4. The Mayor should recognise that CMIs and Green Municipal Bonds as part of the package of investments that will create positive economic opportunities and carbon neutrality while building community wealth.
5. Bristol should join the other councils using CMIs to develop local opportunities for local investors [5]
6. We need to create a lending facility for private individual who want to upgrade their homes and save energy on as low an interest rate as possible.

Full Council resolves:

1. To call on the Mayor to work with the City Leap joint venture to begin development of Community Municipal Investments for the city.
2. That the Mayor promote CMI as a way residents and institutions can be engaged and actively involved in contributing to a zero carbon city.
3. To work up a Green Bond scheme for the city to fund carbon saving infrastructure projects.

4. To request officers to identify carbon saving projects suited to CMI and Green Bond investments in conjunction with partners including the City Leap joint venture.

Motion to be moved by: Cllr Lisa Stone (Green)

Date of submission: 20/12/2022

References:

1. The report supported by Bristol: <https://baumaninstitute.leeds.ac.uk/research/financing-for-society/>

2. Initial proposed interest rate is 1.2%. See: Your questions answered on Green Community Bonds | Abundance Blog

<https://medium.abundanceinvestment.com/community-municipal-investments-your-questions-answered-25218ed4d2cb>

3. Survey by One Poll, 2020, cited by the Local Government Association.

4. https://medium.abundanceinvestment.com/community-municipal-investments-the-new-option-for-your-low-risk-money-a9cc5d72e03a?source=post_internal_links-----1-----

5. These are: Leeds Council, Warrington, and West Berkshire. Eg Invest now:

<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/wbcmi>; <https://www.abundanceinvestment.com/invest-now/warrington-2025>

Time for the Fair Game manifesto in football

Full Council believes that:

Football, the national game in the UK, is currently in crisis.

COVID-19 devastated the revenue of many lower-league clubs, and the cost-of-living crisis could be the knock-out blow for dozens of clubs.

Frequently bad management has gone unnoticed or ignored and clubs are run unsustainably, putting at risk all the history, heritage, and economic benefit they bring to an area – often in pursuit of short-term gain.

Council believes that football clubs are not ordinary businesses; they are historic sporting institutions that are both a civic and community asset, and a source of pride and unity, in their hometown or city.

Full Council therefore supports Fair Game, a national campaign that seeks radical reform of the way football is managed and run, specifically its call for:

- An independent regulator for the sport.
- A refocus on 'values' rather than profit.
- The establishment of a Sustainability Index, which will reallocate the payments made to clubs to reward those which are run well, respect equality standards and properly engage with their fans and their community.
- Fans to be given the final say on any proposed change to a club's 'crown jewels', including the club's name, nickname, colours, badge and the geographical location from where the club plays.
- Council also notes that former Sports Minister Tracey Crouch MP has published a Government-commissioned fan-led review into football governance and that a vast majority of its findings mirror Fair Game's aspirations.

Full Council resolves to:

- Declare its support for the Fair Game manifesto, 'Solutions for our National Game', and calls on other councils to join us in our support.
- Ask the Mayor and Party Group Leaders to write to the Minister for Sport, our local Members of Parliament, and the Chair of the Local Government Association Culture, Tourism and Sport Board, asking them to support and work towards implementing Fair Game's manifesto and the findings of the fan-led review led by Tracey Crouch MP.
- Ask the Council's representatives to encourage other like-minded councils to support Fair Game.

Motion to be moved by Cllr Barry Parsons (Green)

Co-proposer: Councillor Mohamed Makawi (Green)

Date of submission: 21/12/2022

ENDORSEMENT OF THE PLANT BASED TREATY

Full Council notes that:

1. In November 2018 Full Council declared a Climate Emergency and Bristol committed to becoming carbon neutral and climate resilient by 2030. [1]
2. The sixth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported in 2021 in its Working Group 1 Assessment Report [2] that it is “virtually certain” that heat waves have become more frequent and more intense since the 1950s, with human-caused warming being “the main driver” and some of the heat extremes seen over the past decade would have been “extremely unlikely to occur” without the climate crisis.
3. The earth's average surface temperature is projected to hit 1.5C above pre-industrial levels around 2030, a decade earlier than the IPCC predicted just three years ago.
4. Between 2014 and 2021 there has been faster growth of atmospheric concentrations of methane. Growth since 2007 is largely driven by emissions from fossil fuels and agriculture, with 32% of methane emissions attributed to animal agriculture.
5. The UN recommends 45% cuts to methane by 2030 [3] in order to limit temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
6. Data derived from the IPCC 2014 5th assessment [4] reveals animal agriculture emissions as 35% of energy production, a figure which excludes deforestation emissions attributed to the growing of crops for farmed animals.
7. The Amazon rainforest is now a carbon source rather than a carbon sink as a direct result of deforestation, with around 80% of the deforestation caused by animal agriculture. [5]
8. The 2019 Land Use report by Ritchie, H. and Roser, M. (2019)[6], calculated that 78% of farmland is used to farm animals yet supplies just 18% of global calories and 37% of protein.
9. A global initiative is underway calling for a Plant Based Treaty [7] that through its three Rs, Relinquish, Redirect and Restore aims to halt the accelerating expansion of animal agriculture, incentivise and promote a plant-based food system, rewild critical ecosystems in line with the global commitment to limit warming to 1.5°C, and work to mitigate the climate crisis with fair, equitable transition plans.
10. The Plant Based Treaty has been welcomed by 20 Members of the UK Parliament through EDM 434 [8] which calls on the Government “to be a world leader in recognising the negative impact of industrial animal agriculture on climate change and commit to developing a global strategy to transition towards more sustainable plant-based food systems.”

11. Several local authorities across the UK have already made a commitment to move towards a plant-based future, including Lewisham Borough Council (fully plant-based in all corporate events), Enfield Borough Council (does not serve meat at any meetings or events), Faversham Town Council (fully plant-based at events), Hythe Town Council (fully plant-based at all council functions), Leeds City Council (two meat free days per week in schools), Oxfordshire County Council (fully plant-based in all meetings & events), and Cambridge City Council (fully plant-based at meetings & promoting PB at events).

Full Council believes that:

1. The rapid, strong, and sustained reduction in the three greenhouse gases, namely Carbon Dioxide, Methane and Nitrous Oxide and zero deforestation is a climate imperative.
2. The Paris Climate Agreement is silent on the impact of animal agriculture, one of the largest sources of greenhouse gases, and that needs to be collectively addressed by other means.

Full Council resolves to:

1. Formally endorse the call for a Plant Based Treaty and write to the UK government to call for a global Plant Based Treaty.
2. Help mitigate the climate, ocean, and biodiversity crisis by addressing our food system, including promoting the benefits of locally grown, plant-based foods. For example, encouraging council-run schools to have regular, meat-free days.
3. Lead by example and follow other local authorities in making a commitment to plant-based food at all council meetings and events, where food is served.

Motion to be moved by: Cllr Andrew Varney (Liberal Democrat)

Date of submission: 21 December 22

Increase Publicly Available EV Charge Points

Full Council notes that:

1. Sales of new petrol, diesel and “mild-hybrid” cars are due to be banned from 2030.
2. Sales of new “plug-in hybrid” cars are due to be banned from 2035.
3. Bristol has a lack of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points.
4. Much of the housing stock of Bristol does not have private off-road parking provision where residents can instal their own charging facilities.
5. The EV chargepoint scheme provides grants towards the costs of installing charging points for private use for those who own flats or are in rented accommodation – but requires that the applicant(s) has/have sole use of a private parking space.
6. The Government amended Building Regulations in June 2022 so all new build residential and non-residential property and those undergoing major renovation must provide an electric vehicle charge point.
7. Figures from Friends of the Earth suggest that Bristol currently has only 125 publicly accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Points – against a target of 1,627 (derived from the national target of 300,000.)
8. The council has installed – or facilitated the installation of – 84 public charge points, and currently have planned projects to provide a) 150 charge points distributed across 15 wards/10 streets, and b) 10 “ultra-rapid” charging bays as part of the eVan hire scheme. Both these projects are due to be completed in 2023/24.
9. Council notes the funding received by other authorities to develop their EV infrastructure. For instance, in March 2020 Nottingham City with Nottinghamshire and Derby City Councils were granted over £16m funding by the Department for Transport. The Department of Transport recently announced a pilot project to fund 1,000 public charging points across 9 council areas – but that this does not include Bristol.

Full Council believes that:

1. The lack of a substantial network of public charging points imposes a barrier to people switching from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles.
2. That the provision of public charging points will speed the transition to electric vehicles, and that this will help meet climate change objectives as well as improve air quality within the city.
3. The impact of the lack of a public charging infrastructure is most acute in areas of the city which have terraced or flatted housing and/or higher proportions of rented accommodation, where installation of private charging points is not practical. This is likely to most disadvantage those who are younger or on lower incomes.
4. It is unreasonable for government to expect councils to fully fund the required infrastructure costs, but that the council should be more ambitious in their ambitions given the relevant imminency of the ban on fossil-fuelled cars.
5. Re-affirms its commitment to encourage the use active travel or public transport wherever possible irrespective of the power-source of private vehicles.

Full Council resolves to:

1. Set a target of providing 750 public charging points – in addition to those already in place or planned - by 2030, to support our efforts in tackling the climate emergency.
2. Require the Mayor to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and other relevant Ministers, to seek further funding towards achieving this target, and meeting the higher target of 1,627.
3. Requests the Local Plan Working Group review the existing local EV charging points policy and consider whether it needs further revision.
4. Establish a cross-departmental working group to identify potential locations, funding streams and supply chains of public EV charging points with a focus on areas of high-density housing where private provision would be excessively difficult. This group should also engage with major landowners to develop their provisions (for instance supermarkets, large private car parks, retail centres). This group should have a focus on delivery in accordance with the Energy Savings Trust's best practice guides.

Motion to be moved by: Cllr Jos Clark (Liberal Democrat)

Date of submission: 21 12 2022

Food sustainability motion

This Council notes

- Livestock is responsible for 14% of global greenhouse gases.
- Meat consumption has dropped by 17% in the decade leading up to 2019,
- However, the Government's Food strategy for England recommended cutting meat consumption by a further 30% in a decade.
- As well as reducing meat consumption, work to promote local food growing and reducing food waste is needed to make our food system more sustainable.
- The Labour administration in Bristol is already leading the way on this, as is evident in it being awarded Gold Status for Food Sustainability.

This Council believes:

- We can build on this good work by further encouraging people to make more carbon-friendly food choices.
- Gradual steps are needed if we are to encourage people to take up more sustainable diets and blunt instruments like total bans may cause people to simply not use Council / council-procured catering.

This Council resolves to:

- Explore with Council catering services to only offer plant-based options on one day a week – in a system like 'Meat Free Mondays' Through the One City network, encourage schools, universities, and businesses to do the same.
- Encourage any events on Council-landed, or council-funded events, to offer vegan and vegetarian options.
- Reach out to local schools to encourage them to review their cooking courses to include a wider range of sustainable options and promote plant-based cooking.

Proposed by Cllr Katja Hornchen (Labour)

Submitted: 21 December 2022

Democracy Motion

This Council notes that the Conservative Government's Elections Act replaced the Supplementary Vote system used to elect Metro Mayors and Police and Crime Commissioners with First Past The Post.

First Past the Post (FPTP) originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men.

In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections. Meanwhile, internationally, Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. Those countries tend to be more equal, freer, and greener.

PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and that those seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs, Parliaments, and other bodies better reflect the age, gender mix and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation.

MPs (and other representatives) better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation, and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken. PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. PR also prevents 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in 1951 and February 1974.

PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. So why not English Local Government or Westminster?

The Elections Act also brought in compulsory photo ID for people wanting to vote, despite the fact that three and a half million people in this country do not have any photo ID, while those forms of ID that are acceptable have been rigged to disadvantage and deter younger voters.

In contrast the Welsh Senedd passed the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill on 21 January this year which delivered the following:

- The right of Local Councils to scrap First Past the Post and instead elect Councillors using the Single Transferable Vote
- Votes at 16 - extending the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds and to all foreign citizens legally resident in Wales.
- Automatic Voter Registration - The bill also paves the way for an overhaul of Wales' outdated and ineffective system of voter registration. The bill could lead to a new system where registration officers can identify people missing from the register and let them know they'll be added.

English voters are already disadvantaged compared to voters in Northern Ireland, where STV has been used to elect Councils for decades, Scotland, where the same move was made in 2007, and now Wales is making the same changes.

This Council agrees to join the campaign by the Electoral Reform Society to demand the same rights for English voters that are already enjoyed by voters in Northern Ireland where STV has been used for years, Scotland, where STV came in for Council elections in 2007 and in Wales where Councils will, inevitably, make the move to fair voting.

This Council also commits to working with other Councils, Core Cities, and others to amend and if necessary repeal the Elections Act in order to:

- Reverse the scrapping of the Supplementary Vote system that ensures more votes count in Metro Mayor and PCC elections;
- Demand the list of acceptable photo ID for voters in the Elections Act is amended so younger and poorer voters are not excluded; including fully funding the cost of providing voter ID cards for voters with no other valid forms of ID
- Allow:
 - English Councils to switch to STV if they so chose
 - Votes at 16 for all UK elections
 - Automatic Voter Registration enabling registration officers to identify people missing from the register and let them know they'll be added.

Finally this Council acknowledges that British democracy is broken and calls on all UK political parties to embrace electoral reform for all elections so everyone can vote for the candidates or parties they truly believe in, safe in the knowledge that their vote will always count. Council therefore resolves to write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for all UK elections.

Proposed by Cllr Fabian Breckels (Labour)

Submitted: 21 December 2022